

# FACULTY CIRCUIT

October 2003

Alberta Colleges & Institutes  
Faculties Association

acifa

Serving college and technical institute faculty

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we settle into the new academic year, I am pleased to provide members with an update on recent activities and developments at ACIFA.

In line with the updated Vision for the organization developed by the presidents of our associations at the Planning Retreat last winter, we have been working to develop more effective communications with government, especially the Ministry of Learning, and with other key stakeholder groups in the post-secondary system in Alberta. To this end, John Nicholls, who had been working part-time over the past year, joined us full-time this summer as Research & Liaison Officer, working alongside Terry Sway, our Labour Relations Officer, and Lynn Devlin, our Executive Officer.

A central concern has been Bill 43, the proposed new single Act for Post-Secondary Learning, which was given First Reading last May, just before the MLAs adjourned for the summer. The timing was intentional, to allow time for stakeholders to provide feedback and for amendments to be considered, before the Bill is debated during the November sitting. ACIFA was invited by the ADM for Adult Learning, Phil Gougeon, to respond to the Bill, and over the summer, ACIFA was involved in back-and-forth discussions of various sections of the Bill with the Learning Ministry, and with the other stakeholders.

As timelines shortened, with the policy regulations on which key sections of the legislation depend still unwritten, in mid-August we prepared a preliminary written submission to Learning on the Bill – reserving the right to comment further as the revised legislation evolved. (This submission is available @ [www.acifa.ca](http://www.acifa.ca).)

Together with our university colleagues, the President and Executive Director of CAFA, John and I met with the Minister of Learning, Dr. Lyle Oberg, to discuss our concerns with the Bill, and with the continuing crisis in post-secondary funding. This was a productive meeting, in which the Minister gave us an insight into his thinking

and listened attentively to our arguments on a range of issues raised by the Bill, including faculty's right to strike, designation of academic staff, and the powers of boards. I believe we had a useful exchange with the Minister, and one which has since led to further invitations to ACIFA to provide input to the Ministry.

With respect to Campus Alberta, the key government initiative on which the extension of degree-granting powers to colleges and institutes depends, there are as yet few details. ACIFA participated in a meeting of the stakeholders' focus group invited to review the proposed terms of reference, working methods, and composition of the new Campus Alberta Board announced in Bill 43. It now seems likely that implementation of the Board may be delayed past next spring.

On concerns arising from Bill 43 and funding shortfalls in the post-secondary system, ACIFA has been working closely with our colleagues from CAFA, and has begun to explore common ground with other provincial stakeholders such as ACTISEC, the colleges/institutes students' organization, and AACTI, which represents the presidents and board chairs of the colleges and institutes. I am convinced that these contacts can only serve to strengthen our influence with the Alberta government, at a critical time for our sector.

I was heartened by the constructive attitude displayed by the association presidents from across the province gathered at the September meeting of the ACIFA Presidents' Council, where there was much positive feedback on our lobbying and liaison initiatives. Our guest at that meeting was the man with overall responsibility for the post-secondary system, Phil Gougeon, from Alberta Learning, who addressed our issues in a collegial manner, and responded candidly to our questions and comments.

Our goal is to ensure that faculty have a voice in decisions affecting the future of post-secondary education. With your support, we will continue to press our concerns with the politicians and bureaucrats.

- Bert Giles, President of ACIFA

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## ACIFA 2004 MORGEX Award For Innovation in Teaching

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*The aim of the MORGEX Award for Innovation in Teaching is to recognize and encourage the use of innovative and creative teaching methods and design which lead to improved student learning.*

*This province-wide award attracts both recognition and a financial award of \$1,500 for the faculty member or team and \$500.00 for the faculty member's faculty association. Certificates of Commendation will be awarded to the three runners-up.*

### **Eligibility**

The Award is open to all ACIFA members. The nomination may be for an individual or a group/team. Nominations for the Award are made by colleagues with the consent of the innovator(s). Nominations must adhere to the *Format for Applications* below.

An innovation which has already received this Award can not be resubmitted the following year. Innovations which have been unsuccessful but have received a Certificate of Commendation are eligible for resubmission, within the context of the guidelines, the following year.

### **The Nomination Process**

Each participating ACIFA member association will conduct a nomination and selection process at the local level, in accordance with the guidelines in this document, to select a nominee to be submitted to the ACIFA Awards Committee. The ACIFA Awards Committee, established by the Professional Affairs Committee of ACIFA, will select the winner of the award from nominees put forward by each of the participating local faculty associations.

### **Selection Criteria**

- The extent to which the innovation has had a practical outcome that improved teaching, learning, curriculum design, and/or assessment.
- Evidence of student satisfaction and learning outcomes.
- Evidence that the innovation was successfully integrated into the total learning process for the relevant course of study.
- The potential for the innovation to be applied to different fields of study
- The extent to which the innovation made effective and efficient use of resources.

### **Format for Applications: 2-3 page limit plus appendices**

Please provide information in the following format:

1. Innovator/project team details: name(s), position, and college/institute
2. A description of the innovation
3. The rationale for implementing the change
4. The outcomes of the innovation
5. The wider application of the innovation in post-secondary education
6. Names and signatures of two nominees
7. Any supporting documentation to be attached as appendices

### **Judging Panels: provincial and local**

Five members elected on an annual basis from and by the Professional Affairs Committee of ACIFA will select the final award winner and three runners-up from the nominees submitted by the local faculty associations. The local faculty association judging committees are to be selected and structured by the local faculty association as they deem appropriate for their association.

### **Application Dates**

Applications must be submitted to the faculty member's faculty association by the date set by local faculty association. Each Association's selection process must be completed in time to submit their nominee to ACIFA by February 20, 2004.

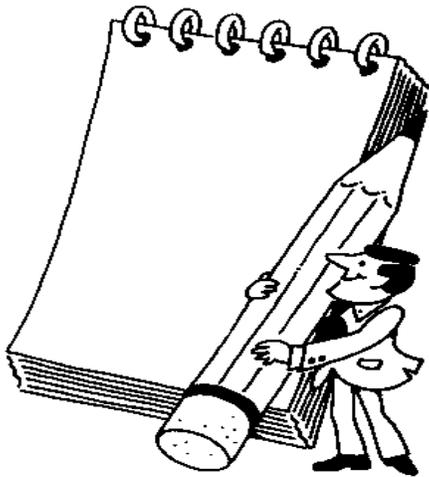
ACIFA Awards Committee to make final decision by mid March to allow sufficient time for the recognition of the winner at the ACIFA Annual Conference.

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**Copies of the application form for the ACIFA 2004 MORGEX Award for Innovation in Teaching will be available from local association offices, and on the ACIFA website (<http://www.acifa.ca>), in early November 2003.**

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*This award is sponsored by MORGEX Insurance Group Ltd. and administered by the Alberta Colleges and Technical Institutes Faculties Association.*



## Annual ACIFA Climate Survey Coming Soon!

The annual ACIFA Climate Survey, which will soon be distributed to academic staff association offices around the province, is a valuable tool for the tabulation and analysis of the views of academic staff members on working conditions and attitudes within their respective institutions.

The Climate Survey asks individual academic staff members to indicate level of agreement, on a scale of 1 to 5, with thirteen statements, such as *Senior administration communicates openly with faculty*, and *The president of this institution provides effective leadership*. In addition, local associations may also include up to ten further questions specific to their own institutions.

The relatively high response rate from ACIFA members, and the continuity from year to year of the thirteen core survey questions asked system-wide, provide a strong foundation to assist academic staff associations in discussions with their administrations regarding key areas of concern within their institutions.

A cross-institutional score chart, giving mean scores, by institution, for each of the thirteen questions common to all, will be published in the *ACIFA Faculty Circuit* next spring.

## The Learning Commission Report – 95 Recommendations

The Learning Commission appointed in June 2002 to review the state of Alberta's education system has issued its Report, *Every Child Learns; Every Child Succeeds*, which contains 95 recommendations for government action:

See

<http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/Commission/PDF/CommissionReport.pdf> - or -

<http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/Commission/PDF/Highlights.pdf>

The Minister of Learning, Dr. Lyle Oberg, is reacting to the Commission's Report with caution, and insists that each of the 95 recommendations must be reviewed on its merits. For one thing, the Commission identifies a massive shortfall in current funding of the K-12 system, which can only be redressed with significant new investment by government.

Despite its focus on the K-12 side, several of the Commission's recommendations have a bearing on the post-secondary system, eg.:

**#11. *Develop and implement a comprehensive, province-wide strategy with the goal of ensuring that 90% of students complete grade 12 within four years of starting high school.***

**#12. *Undertake a comprehensive, independent review of Alberta's post-secondary education system.***

[The Learning Commission reports that it *heard numerous concerns about the post-secondary system, ranging from the need to ensure better transitions from high school to the need to review completion rates and the capacity of post-secondary institutions to accommodate the expected increase in the number of students who will need some form of post-secondary education to be successful in Alberta's economy and as global citizens.* ]

**#81. [including] *Expand teachers' professional responsibilities but maintain their right to strike.***



## **CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

ACIFA Annual Conference 2004

### **“Learning, Leading n’Lightening”**

Mountain Park Lodges, Jasper  
May 30 – June 2, 2004

We invite submissions from prospective presenters for Conference sessions related to one of the following themes:

- ✓ Learning: the students’ perspective
  - Enhancing learning experiences
  - Developing learning strategies
  - Innovations for learning
- ✓ Leading: the faculty’s perspective
  - Changing climate and culture in post-secondary institutions
  - Preparing for leadership roles
  - Direction from the Ministry
  - Trends in leadership; changing roles
- ✓ n’Lightening: considering external factors
  - economic drivers and post-secondary education
  - business partnerships
  - politics and education

## **TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL**

Please complete a Session Proposal Form for ACIFA 2004, available from your academic staff association office or on our new website at [www.acifa.ca](http://www.acifa.ca)

RETURN TO:

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DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS  
December 15, 2003

### **Editorial Content**

The views in the Faculty Circuit are those of individuals and do not necessarily reflect ACIFA’s policies and positions. Please address all inquiries and submissions to:

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### **Member Associations**

Alberta College of Art and Design Faculty Association  
Bow Valley College Faculty Association  
Faculty Association of Medicine Hat College  
Fairview College Academic Staff Association  
Grande Prairie Regional College Academic Staff Association  
Grant MacEwan College Faculty Association  
Keyano College Faculty Association  
Lakeland College Faculty Association  
Lethbridge Community College Faculty Association  
Mount Royal Faculty Association  
NAIT Academic Staff Association  
NorQuest College Faculty Association  
Northern Lakes College Faculty Association  
Olds College Faculty Association  
Portage College Faculty Association  
SAIT Academic Faculty Association